

FINAL REPORT

Jordan Poverty Alleviation Project, Phase I

Task Order 800



NATHAN
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Executive Summary

Conducted by Nathan Associates under the SEGIR Macroeconomic Policy IQC from February 2001 to June 2003, the Jordan Poverty Alleviation Program (JPAP) is unique. It is the only USAID program of its kind whereby a national strategy for poverty alleviation was created by a U.S. government-sponsored program and adopted by the host-country government and widely viewed as the government's own initiative. Such was the case with JPAP—the Government and people of Jordan viewed it as a *Jordanian* initiative. JPAP was able to build support among other bilateral and multilateral donors and organizations in the strategy's creation, and as such has achieved buy-in from the international community. This report summarizes Nathan Associates' activities as the sole contractor for JPAP. Its findings comprise only a fraction of the long-term impacts of JPAP because the Government of Jordan continues to implement programs outlined in the strategy, leveraging other donor resources. JPAP could be a model for future USAID programming in the Middle East region and around the world.

The project achieved all of the goals set out in the contract:

- Create a Policy Advisory and Implementation Unit at the Ministry of Social Development within 90 calendar days of the resident adviser's arrival.
- Conduct two national conferences to broaden the national consensus for a poverty alleviation strategy.
- Draft a National Poverty Alleviation Strategy for Jordan compatible with international best practices and Jordan's social and cultural environment.
- Develop a comprehensive implementation plan for the National Strategy, differentiating roles and responsibilities of the relevant ministries, agencies, the Social Productivity Program, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and donor agencies.
- Conduct up to 20 observational and experiential trips to the United States for Jordanian officials and staff, selected by H.E. the Minister.

JPAP was able to achieve these goals even with the authorized evacuation of staff because of the war in Iraq. In addition, JPAP worked with the Ministry of Social Development to

implement the Family Income Supplement and other programs to reorient the National Aid Fund from a *welfare-oriented* to a *welfare-to-work-oriented* organization

Since the task order ended, JPAP has been featured in the United Nations' *Human Development Report* for Jordan, and the long-awaited publication of the 2002 House Expenditure and Income Survey data reveals that Jordan has reduced poverty from 21.3 percent in 1997 to 14.2 percent in 2002.

This assessment of JPAP's progress, successes, and problems is a guide the USAID Mission and follow-on programs can use in planning and implementing poverty reduction activities in Jordan.

1. Jordan Poverty Alleviation Program—Design and Objectives

This report summarizes Nathan Associates' activities as the sole contractor under contract PCE-I-00-00-00013-00, SEGIR Macroeconomic Policy IQC, Task Order for the Jordan Poverty Alleviation Project (JPAP), conducted from February 2001 to June 2003. It presents JPAP accomplishments from 2000 to 2003, its strengths and weaknesses, achievements, and results that suggest possible directions for follow-on work or areas where new initiatives will have an impact on overcoming poverty in Jordan. This assessment of the project's progress, successes, and problems is for the USAID Mission and follow-on programs to use in planning and implementing poverty reduction activities in Jordan.

JPAP was designed to develop a National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (National Strategy), assist the Government of Jordan's implementation of the National Strategy, and advise the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) on policy. The project used geographic information systems (GIS) technology to conduct a poverty mapping exercise to understand and assess poverty at the governorate level. This activity falls under USAID/Jordan's Economic Opportunities Strategic Objective (SO5), to promote market-based economic growth and restructuring in Jordan. The SO responds directly to concerns that benefits of economic restructuring may not proportionately reach poorer segments of the population. The SO stipulates that only by reaching out to groups that have not yet benefited from the reform process—the poor, those unable to work, the elderly, and residents of isolated areas of the country—will Jordan maintain support for reform efforts and sustain its economic restructuring program.¹

The program's two components were to develop a National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation, and provide a full-time senior resident adviser to Her Excellency the Minister of Social Development. The resident adviser was to assist H.E. the Minister in implementing the Strategy and improving the ministry's management procedures and structures.

¹ USAID/Jordan contract with Nathan Associates Inc., PCE-I-00-00-00013-00, Task Order 800.

The following deliverables were specified for the two components:

- Create a Policy Advisory and Implementation Unit at the Ministry of Social Development within 90 calendar days of the resident adviser's arrival.
- Conduct two national conferences as part of an effort to broaden the national consensus for a poverty alleviation strategy.
- Draft a National Poverty Alleviation Strategy for Jordan compatible with international best practices and Jordan's social and cultural environment.
- Develop a comprehensive implementation plan for the National Strategy differentiating roles and responsibilities of the relevant ministries, agencies, the Social Productivity Program, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and donor agencies.
- Conduct up to 20 observational and experiential trips to the United States for Jordanian officials and staff, selected by H.E. the Minister.

Within the National Strategy, JPAP identified a need to restructure the National Aid Fund (NAF), Jordan's cash assistance program, including streamlining its policies and procedures, automating processes, developing a better-trained and more customer service-oriented workforce, and implementing quality assurance procedures. JPAP also recommended and assisted in implementing the Family Income Supplement (FIS) to raise families' incomes to the poverty line and provide financial incentives to the working poor, ultimately decreasing per family expenditures and allowing the agency to reach more people in need.

JPAP also provided training opportunities for its staff and counterparts through study tours and overseas training in economics, social development, and gender and development issues.

Program Funding

The initial award for Task Order 800 for \$1,654,625 was made February 14, 2001, to design, develop, and implement a national strategy for poverty reduction for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and advise the Ministry of Social Development on managerial and administrative improvement in delivery of services.

- Modification 1, March 13, 2001, provided for offices separate from the Ministry and office equipment for JPAP; the original contract relied on the Ministry to supply this equipment.
- Modification 2, April 2001 amended the local staffing pattern to replace two junior specialists with one senior specialist.
- Modification 3, July 2002, reallocated funds from other direct costs to workdays ordered to allow amplification of the short-term technical assistance program.

- Modification 4, February 6, 2003, extended the contract through December 31, 2003, and reallocated remaining unexpended funds in other direct costs to expand the expatriate short-term technical assistance program.

Program Staffing and Level of Effort

JPAP's offices opened in May 2001, across the street from the Ministry of Social Development with a team of local consultants in health and education, economics and microfinance, information technology, and family issues. Staffing consisted of the Chief of Party, Carmen Nazario, who had more than a dozen years of experience in human services policy and management; three senior consultants; an administrative assistant; a driver; and short-term consultants. In October 2002, the staff expanded to include an additional senior consultant. Carmen Nazario served through December 2002, when she was replaced by Janet Hansen. In total, approximately 3,085 days of professional services were supplied—170 days expatriate short-term labor, 545 days for the chief of party, and 2,370 days for third-country nationals (TCNs), local hires, or Jordanian professional staff.

2. Poverty Alleviation in Jordan

As the USAID/Jordan Mission and the Government of Jordan researched strategies for poverty reduction, JPAP's architects realized the need for a comprehensive, strategic approach to combating poverty. The program has changed the way the government engages in social programming and streamlined programs so that more of the funds reach the poor. These successes could not have been achieved without the tenacity and hard work of a strong team of professionals and support from USAID and the Government of Jordan, particularly the Ministry of Social Development. This section reviews JPAP's qualitative and quantitative successes, setbacks, and project management.

Successes

The National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation was JPAP's greatest achievement. Project staff worked to include stakeholders and other donors in creating a strategy and encouraging Jordanians' ownership of it. As a result, it has been widely accepted in government and by the public, and has brought greater attention to poverty in the country. The National Strategy provides a government-wide roadmap for poverty reduction initiatives. It is the first comprehensive national plan to address health care, the environment, education, sustainable microfinance, economic security of low-income working families, and employment opportunities in rural areas and secondary towns in the context of alleviating poverty.

QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Working in partnership with the government to effect institutional change has resulted in more efficient policies for the poor and near-poor. The National Strategy, the National Steering Committee appointed by the Cabinet to oversee implementation, and the Focal Points Committee, a technical review group, have brought the respective government ministries together around poverty reduction. The relationships JPAP built with stakeholders and officials at MOSD and other relevant ministries allowed the project to implement reforms, particularly in restructuring the NAF and introducing the FIS. JPAP catalyzed change in the

delivery of social services in Jordan, introducing processes and procedures to improve customer service, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The National Strategy has introduced new ways of thinking about change management in government. It has automated processes and procedures formerly done by hand, enabling easier collection and manipulation of data and statistics. This data collection will inform policy decisions. The use of GIS technology for poverty mapping was a first for Jordan; the results have been widely used and consulted at the highest levels of government.

QUANTITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Introduction of the FIS was a major achievement for JPAP. Within a 12-month period, the program lifted 60,000 families (40 percent of those living in poverty) to the national poverty line and provided incentives for the working poor. This is a 10 percent increase in the number of poor served by cash assistance services.

JPAP managed the implementation of a community-based program that trained more than 12,000 women in reproductive health, economic, and social decision-making and family planning. The 2004 *Jordan Human Development Report*, outlining the main achievements of the National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation, is included as Appendix A of this report.

Setbacks

The project experienced only a few unavoidable setbacks. The most serious of these was the evacuation status the U.S. Embassy instituted February 8, 2003, because of the war in Iraq, and lifted April 28, 2003. The chief of party returned to post May 5, 2003, on the first available flight. The local staff did an excellent job of running the project with the chief of party working remotely, and assumed greater responsibility for project management. JPAP was still able to meet and exceed the goals of the contract Scope of Work, but probably could have made more progress sooner had the evacuation not occurred. The evacuation also diverted funds from other short-term technical assistance activities.

The war in Iraq affected the region, Jordan, and the project's progress. It shifted much national attention and effort from internal development and poverty alleviation to other priorities. Some degree of momentum for poverty alleviation was lost in this diversion of national attention.

Throughout the project, JPAP has been privileged to work with three different Ministers of Social Development. The project has worked with each minister on issues of concern to him or her as well as the National Strategy. While each minister has been appropriate for

implementing the National Strategy through different phases, frequent ministerial changes disrupted program implementation and caused a general lack of continuity.

The local currency fund made as a cash transfer from USAID, separate from the JPAP project budget, was an aspect of program structure that afforded opportunities and challenges for project implementation and JPAP's relationship with the MOSD. The fund was a welcome supplement to the relatively small JPAP budget and supported a number of positive effects. It allowed the project to hire additional staff, procure computer hardware and software, provide training opportunities, and support implementation at the NAF. However, administering these funds and handling the technical aspects of the accounting and approval process for their expenditure took time away from the COP and Deputy COP. Further, the fund blurred lines of administrative authority, as it was not provided for under Nathan Associates' contract with USAID. Additionally, in making procurements with these funds, JPAP had to follow the Ministry's formal process, as opposed to USAID regulations; this caused significant delays in contracting and procurement.

Project Management

The project team was assembled in February 2001 with an expatriate adviser providing technical and management assistance and Jordanian professional staff supporting project implementation activities. The original team consisted of four professional staff: Laila Tuqan, project administrator; senior consultants Perit Hakuz, Information Technology, and Salma Jaouni, Health and Education; and Lamia Saket, Microfinance and Cash Assistance. In October 2002, the staff expanded to include Ruba Atallah, a senior consultant for family issues and special needs, and one full-time driver. In November 2002, Salma Jaouni was promoted to Deputy Chief of Party. During the evacuation period, Ms. Jaouni was responsible for project management from Amman, with technical and management oversight from Ms. Hansen, who worked from Nathan Associates' home office in Arlington, Virginia.

Activities were programmed in an annual work plan approved by the Mission. Two home-office staff from Nathan Associates, Leila Calnan and Christa Lachenmayr, supported the project.

3. Program Review

This section reviews JPAP program activities, and includes material from earlier project reviews and reports that will be useful in understanding the activities implemented or actions taken and determining follow-on opportunities.

The National Strategy

The National Strategy takes a holistic approach to reducing poverty, addressing health care, environment, education, and sustainable microfinance; improving economic security of low-income working families; and increasing employment opportunities in rural areas and secondary towns. It limits its scope to poverty alleviation and does not attempt to build a comprehensive social policy.

The broad-based national initiatives cut across a wide range of Government of Jordan ministries, the NAF, and a number of programs, councils, and private enterprises. Each section of the strategy report, *Poverty Alleviation for a Stronger Jordan:: A Comprehensive National Strategy*, was developed by a JPAP staff member from discussions, extensive research on Jordan, international, and regional best practices, and high-level meetings to discuss the draft. These sections became a series of presentations that evolved into the first draft of the *National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation*. The reports of project consultants Dr. Moh'd Bakir, Ms. Juani Diaz, and Dr. Richard Adams contributed to the National Strategy's development. Dr. Adams conducted a broad assessment of poverty in Jordan, followed by Dr. Bakir's determination of appropriate statistical indicators and Ms. Diaz's assessment of the NAF.

For the most part, each section provides an assessment building on success stories and recommends initiatives for what is needed. The NAF sections were primarily based on Ms. Diaz' assessment of deficiencies in the fund's operations and policies.

Before the draft report was published, the Minister of Social Development made a Flash presentation to the Cabinet, where the National Strategy met some resistance. The COP and the Minister decided to follow this presentation with an additional round of broader-based meetings. They conducted outreach during April 2002 to nine working groups among public

agencies, donors, NGOs, private sector, General Union of Voluntary Societies, academics, media, and a cross-sectional group in Aqaba. They met with donors in November 2001 to get their feedback and elicit future support for Jordan around the National Strategy. The feedback from these groups was considered and incorporated into the final plan and resulted in several new initiatives, addressing environmental and housing issues. This second round of meetings allowed the National Strategy to evolve from a static, U.S.-sponsored strategy thrust upon the stakeholders into a Jordanian national strategy with widespread buy-in among the international donor community, across government ministries, and among NGOs.

The National Strategy illustrates an approach for developing a social safety net system for a country moving from lower-middle income status aiming to integrate into the global economy. The strategy report contains short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations for alleviating poverty among the poorest of the poor, the poor, and the near-poor, based on the poverty line for Jordan developed by the World Bank in 1997 and updated in 1999.

The essence of the National Strategy is nine strategic policy initiatives:

1. Understand, measure, and assess poverty to better target policies and services;
2. Increase assistance to current NAF beneficiaries and extend assistance to those left out;
3. Eliminate duplication in assistance programs;
4. Support sustainable microfinancing and improve economic security of low-income working families;
5. Increase employment opportunities in rural areas and secondary towns through cluster village development;
6. Reduce government's role in facilitating job creation;
7. Ensure that the poor have access to high-quality health care and family planning services in a healthy environment;
8. Ensure that the education system meets the needs of the poor; and,
9. Expand public awareness of efforts to reduce poverty.

The Cabinet endorsed and approved the National Strategy in June 2002, the first time social elements were included in any poverty reduction plan in Jordan. The National Strategy is compatible with the Socio-Economic Transformation Plan, another USAID-funded Government of Jordan initiative that also includes cash assistance and health, education, cluster village development, and administrative reforms for the NAF consistent with elements of the National Strategy.

The National Strategy has proven to be a living document. JPAP and the MOSD have championed the National Strategy by working with government, NGOs, and donor projects

and examining new channels of cooperation to promote the National Strategy and ways to maximize project implementation.

JPAP's practical application of the National Strategy has been through the National Steering Committee and the Focal Points Committee for implementation and specific interventions with the NAF or the Ministry of Labor for cash assistance, income security, and unemployment. JPAP's physical proximity to the MOSD enabled the project to effect change at the NAF. However, this proximity, and the perception of JPAP as an arm of the MOSD, limited the project's effectiveness in working with the full range of issues and ministries detailed in the National Strategy.

STRATEGY GOVERNANCE

National Steering Committee

Shortly after the National Strategy was adopted, under the authority of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet appointed a National Steering Committee to oversee its implementation. Chaired by the Minister of Social Development, the committee was composed of the Secretaries General (second in command) of the Ministries of education, labor, health, interior, finance, planning, and agriculture and the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) and the Jordanian Federation for Women (JFW). The original committee was composed of 15 members; several more were later added, bringing the total to 21. By October 2002, the committee was functioning. In December 2002, JPAP presented the committee with a draft for implementing the National Strategy.

Although it has no financial resources, the National Steering Committee has focused on the issue of poverty in the Kingdom, the National Strategy, and its implementation. The Steering Committee has raised the profile of poverty awareness and of the priority of action for poverty alleviation, and provided a high-level forum for disseminating and coordinating information. It has also offered individual ministries an incentive to undertake projects or target services and participate in this national commitment.

Focal Points Committee

Formed at the recommendation of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah in August 2002, the Focal Points Committee is the technical committee of representatives from ministries and councils involved in the National Strategy. The "Focal Points" are department heads or senior staff in each ministry. They are the key contacts for implementing the National Strategy in their agencies, coordination, developing in-depth understanding of the National Strategy and conveying it to appropriate parties in their organizations, and monitoring and reporting on the status of projects to implement initiatives. The committee meets regularly and also functions as an operational network to assess ways that ministries can collaborate with each

other and with NGOs to avoid duplication. The committee works with the National Steering Committee; and most Focal Points also attend Steering Committee meetings.

The Focal Points Committee meetings were chaired by the JPAP Chief of Party until May 2003, when the responsibility was delegated to the Arabic-speaking JPAP Deputy Chief of Party to facilitate discussion and the committee's work.

Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan compiles in a single document the initiatives undertaken and proposed to implement the National Strategy's specific recommendations. With assistance from and in partnership with JPAP, the Focal Points developed the Implementation Plan adopted and endorsed by the National Steering Committee. The plan provides each ministry with an updated list of projects related to the National Strategy, and allows them to identify synergies or redundancies in programming. The Implementation Plan enables donors to review current programs and their funding levels to identify potential areas for assistance or cooperation.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

As part of the National Strategy dissemination efforts, meetings were conducted with various stakeholders and donors. For these meetings, JPAP developed PowerPoint presentations in English and Arabic summarizing the National Strategy and poverty mapping. Presentations were also made to Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, the Economic Development Council of the Cabinet, the Cabinet ministers, the donor coordinating committee, and the entire donor community. The completed National Strategy and poverty map book were published and widely distributed. Appendix B presents reports and publications, multimedia, CD ROMS, and PowerPoint presentations used to promote public awareness of the national strategy.

The National Strategy was officially launched at a National Conference on Poverty Alleviation in Jordan May 21, 2002, under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah II. Approximately 400 participants from government, NGOs, private sector, donor community, and academics, as well as the President of Nathan Associates, Dr. John C. Beyer, attended the event.

In October 2002, JPAP conducted workshops for managers and local directors of the NAF and the Ministry of Social Development on the National Strategy and the FIS in the north, middle, and south of Jordan. More than 220 people participated in the workshops, conducted jointly with Hashemite University, Karak University, and Jordan University, and had the opportunity to learn about the National Strategy. The presidents of these universities expressed their support and volunteered their students to assist the FIS implementation.

The JPAP web site went live in January 2003. It provides public access to the National Strategy, and contains information on strategy implementation, as well as reports and publications.

Outreach and public awareness continues through a series of Flash and PowerPoint presentations. JPAP also hosted briefings with social development and poverty alleviation organizations.

Poverty Mapping

In conjunction with the National Strategy, JPAP produced a map book based on the 1997 Household Expenditure and Income Survey (HEIS) illustrating the incidence and depth of poverty in Jordan by governorate. JPAP procured the software and conducted training to facilitate the first-time use of GIS technology for poverty mapping in Jordan. For this activity, JPAP worked with statistician Dr. Moh'd Bakir. Several thousand copies of the map book were distributed, and it has become synonymous with JPAP.

To more fully understand poverty, JPAP and the Ministry of Social Development worked with the Department of Statistics to double the sample size for the 2002 HEIS so that the GIS portrayal of the data would be statistically accurate at district and subdistrict levels. The 2002 HEIS survey was also expanded to provide information on health, education, and other socioeconomic factors relevant to the National Strategy. These improvements in the survey were initiated to expand capacity for policy and program development.

As of the end of the task order, a draft layout of the map book for the 2002 survey had been produced, the four rounds of the survey were complete by the end of 2002, and data analysis was largely complete. However, the publication of the new map books awaits the government's release of the data and its determination of the official poverty line for Jordan.

Microfinance

USAID modified its implementation practices for microfinance activities through the Achievement of Market-friendly Initiatives and Results (AMIR) program so that microfinance institutions would each have independent boards of directors and individual shareholders, and be financially sustainable and able to reach the poorest of the poor. NGOs piloted these revised practices as illustrated in the National Strategy through improved methods of choosing clients, risk analysis, and decreasing defaults through better project/business success rates.

On the basis of the National Strategy, the Ministry of Planning established advisory business

centers across the Kingdom to help microfinance clients identify suitable projects and prepare feasibility studies or business plans, or both.

Restructuring the National Aid Fund

Shortly after project inception, consultant Juani Diaz produced a comprehensive review of the NAF. The report and presentation of her findings resulted in the Cabinet's decision in November 2001 to create terms of reference for outsourcing the NAF's management. Although the report recommendations have been universally adopted, the project would likely have been better served by the model used in developing the National Strategy. Because the need for reform was obvious, the consultant focused on making recommendations on international best practices, and did not convene focus groups of staff or engage the agency in a dialogue for reform. Such dialogue would have created ownership of the NAF reforms from the beginning. Instead, the NAF initially perceived the report as a criticism, and it was not well received. Nonetheless, through persistence, hard work, and constant engagement, the JPAP staff was able to overcome this early setback.

Outsourcing of human resources and quality assurance was originally expected to begin in the second quarter of 2002, when JPAP delivered a series of options for human resources, management, and legal parameters for the NAF. JPAP developed an RFP for these services, including extensive performance measures for legal review. The council of ministers approved the RFP in May 2002; it appeared at the end of June 2002, with responses due by July 25. In September, insufficient bids were received and a new tender was issued. The technical committee evaluated four bids in October 2002. In November, the oral presentations for the bids were made. None of the proposals was deemed technically sound and the tender committee recommended that none of the bids be reopened. Upon further examination of the terms of reference, the committee was no longer bound by the tender rules and could approach a company directly to provide services. By the time the new MOSD minister arrived and made a decision on the tender with the Ministry of Planning and the Socioeconomic Transformation Program (SETP), the funding was no longer available to pursue the original RFP.

Although frustrating, this turn of events had some positive results. The extra time taken by the tendering process allowed the project to build more support for NAF reform and engage the staff in the reform process. Also, effecting change from within an organization, as has been done, is much more likely to be sustained and become institutionalized than bringing in someone from the outside. This also resulted in a better-trained and -qualified staff at the NAF (as opposed to a private concern) with more buy-in to the reform. As of the end of Task Order 800, the human resource management and quality assurance aspects of the NAF restructuring were still expected to be outsourced.

Several committees were established to implement the reform: rules and regulations, restructuring, archiving (funded by Islamic bank), and revision of the application form. The new application form collects more information on households, biographical data, training and educational background, health, work history and is an example of cooperation between NAF and the Department of Statistics (DOS), facilitated by JPAP. JPAP developed a concept paper for quality assurance in delivery of services and solicited funding for the proposal.

NAF restructuring consists of the following organizational and policy reforms, slated for implementation by January 2005:

- Family Income Supplement
- Organizational Restructuring
- Quality Assurance
- Human Resource Management
- Archiving
- Information Technology and Automation
- Service Delivery

NAF RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE

In May 2003, H.E. MOSD Dr. Rowaida Ma'aitah formed the committee for restructuring NAF. The committee convened three times within the month. Over four months, the committee drafted an action plan for NAF restructuring, including a new vision for its roles, policies, and functions in line with the National Strategy, and further recommended reforms in automation and human resources management. It also recommended changes to NAF legal parameters, internal processes, and management.

AUTOMATING THE CASH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Part of the approach for streamlining NAF was to create a database of information on the poor, including a revised application form and an automated application, as all files and case information on beneficiaries previously only existed on paper. Centralized filing in Amman restricted the services local offices were able to provide. The database would also allow the NAF to connect other departments and organizations, avoiding duplication of assistance and increasing the efficiency and speed at which aid is granted.

National Assistance Database

Initially the NAF had a custom IT system developed by an outside expert that was not easily upgradeable or universally compatible. JPAP supported the NAF in developing a national

assistance database (NAD) for applicant and beneficiary information supporting policy revisions and NAF reforms. JPAP recruited and supervised two full-time programmers working in the NAF.

The NAD was developed to the point of testing English screens in October 2002, using an on-loan system from Oracle. Development of Arabic screens was delayed until government procurement of the Oracle software could be completed. The NAF procured 140 PCs and 65 laser printers with a grant from the Islamic bank. JPAP assisted the tender process with archiving of electronic and paper files of NAF cases. With JPAP consultation, advice, and recommendations, five NAF IT staff were trained as Microsoft-certified system engineers.

A new beneficiary application form (questionnaire/survey) was developed for use with the new database, and it was revised numerous times to meet changing requirements of the Minister of Social Development and other relevant agencies such as the Department of Statistics. Future technology uses were explored and assessed, including mobile applications such as laptops, personal data assistants (PDAs), and GIS.

In conjunction with the NAF staff, JPAP helped the fund to develop a specific timeline for implementing IT reforms extending through the end of 2004.

Family Income Supplement

To encourage the transition from welfare-oriented cash assistance to a work-oriented program, JPAP introduced the Family Income Supplement (FIS). As an incentive to work, the program takes into account the families' income, reduces that amount by 25 percent, and covers the gap between that income figure and the poverty line. As such, a working poor family is able to achieve an income level of 125 percent of the poverty line, versus a non-working family that receives assistance to the poverty line. By covering some of their household needs through employment earning, NAF beneficiaries require less assistance and allow the program to reach more of those eligible for assistance. In November 2001, the COP and Minister of Social Development met with the NAF director to introduce the idea of the FIS and subsequently developed an implementation process for the supplement in March 2002.

By November 2002, the managers and local directors of the NAF and the Ministry of Social Development had attended JPAP-sponsored workshops on the FIS and the National Strategy. By December 2002, the FIS had replaced the Recurrent Cash Assistance (RCA) program at the NAF, increasing assistance to lift qualifying households' income to the poverty line. The maximum assistance for families of six or more, with children under 18, was increased to JD 156 from the previous maximum of JD 82. A total of 60,000 families have been covered by the NAF since December 2002—40 percent of the poor based on the 1997 HEIS. In addition, nearly

950 individuals have been referred to employment opportunities through the National Employment Program since FIS implementation; an average of 300 NAF beneficiaries enrolled in vocational education programs.

U.S. Study Tour

JPAP conducted a study tour from June 29 through July 11, 2002, in Delaware, Virginia, and Texas. The delegation was headed by H.E. the Minister of Social Development and comprised 12 members including the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer, JPAP staff, and representatives from the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Labor. The group observed public and private cash assistance programs at the state and county levels and learned about IT use in outreach activity, community centers, women's services, health and family planning services, and services to children with special needs, in particular autism. Upon return, they presented 11 recommendations to the Minister of Social Development

1. Ensure an effective welfare system and encourage work by serving intact families, efficient case management, and individual responsibility, guaranteeing that contracts remain core elements of the FIS program.
2. Establish a users group for IT system development at the NAF.
3. Ensure that sufficient IT support is available to program staff as a core element of IT systems development.
4. Establish a budget for IT system maintenance and upgrading after NAF systems automation is completed.
5. Improve outreach for clients through more accessible systems, such as touch-screen kiosks positioned throughout Jordan.
6. Establish regional workforce committees throughout Jordan with representatives from employers in the public and private sectors. These committees will provide communication channels on the market situation, training requirements, and job availability, and will facilitate the formulation of demand-driven policies and enhance public awareness of the job market.
7. Create more effective linkages and referral mechanisms between MOSD and MOL to ensure that the training needs of NAF beneficiaries are met.
8. Link beneficiaries of cash assistance with volunteer programs to help clients develop skills and gain experience until they find jobs.
9. Establish one-stop career centers for greater accessibility to the job market and to develop more effective linkages between the labor supply and the job market.

10. Improve the quality, outreach, efficiency, and effectiveness of primary health care services through private service providers.
11. Facilitate the establishment of a center for diagnostic and programmatic services for autistic children.

As a result of the study tour, the Ministries of Social Development and Labor agreed in principle to further examine the relationship between the workforce and poverty. This dialogue resulted in follow-on Task Order 801.

Linking Poverty and Unemployment

The National Strategy frequently refers to moving the cash assistance program from a *welfare*-oriented to a *work*-oriented program. In July 2002, JPAP engaged consultant Lewis Reade to assess the feasibility of conducting a pilot program between the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Labor through which NAF beneficiaries would receive training at one of the Vocational Training Centers and be placed into jobs by MOSD. Programs such as the FIS also work at the intersection of poverty and employment, allowing the working poor to increase their benefits by 25 percent.

These programs highlighted the importance of labor and employment in poverty reduction and resulted in a follow-on task order, which will provide for a full-time adviser to H.E. Minister of Labor. The adviser will pinpoint how training and education can target NAF beneficiaries and the non-working poor to prepare them to enter the workforce.

Gender Considerations

JPAP conducted several activities specifically aimed at women, both at the Ministry's request and as a result of the National Strategy recommendations.

EMPOWERMENT IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

In January 2002, JPAP drafted and submitted a proposal to the Minister of Social Development for a program to train women in maternal health and family planning, delivered at community centers through peer counselors. Launched in September 2002, the course was a collaborative effort of USAID, JPAP, Johns Hopkins University, the Ministry of Health, and the Jordanian Association for Family Protection. JPAP updated existing materials for the course and produced an instructional video to create awareness among women on family planning methods, maintaining maternal health, the necessity of visiting clinics or hospitals if a family member becomes sick, and the importance of a yearly checkup. The training also focused on decision-making and the number and spacing of children. In

coordination with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication, 20 facilitators nominated by their respective communities were trained on five units of two hours each in outreach and dissemination of reproductive health services. Each facilitator received a small stipend on a per class basis and was expected to conduct 7 to 12 workshops between October and December, reaching a target of 700 women by December 2003.

By October 2002, more than 700 women had participated in the training. Courses were conducted in homes, clinics, schools, community colleges, mosques, and universities. At the end of November, more than 1,700 women had received training. By the time the program was completed at the end of June 2003, 12,635 women and 16 men were provided training through peer counseling at 489 workshops in women's and children's health, family planning, empowerment, and decision-making.

The program's health component specifically emphasized thalassemia², a genetic blood condition found among the peoples of the region. This focused attention on the disease and the importance of premarital blood testing, which has now become mandatory.

Because training fell outside the JPAP program mandate, we recommended that the program be assumed by the MOSD after nine months. The popularity of the program and the number of participants demonstrates the continued demand for this type of service and counseling. A concept paper was developed for the second phase and submitted to the Ministry, and meetings were held in conjunction with Johns Hopkins. But program activities have stopped because of a shortage of resources.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY PLANNING

The poverty mapping exercise revealed that 64 percent of the poor in Jordan live in households with five or more children. The Minister of Social Development and the Deputy Prime Minister (now the Minister of National Economy and Minister of State) requested a plan for the formation of a National Council on Family Planning with terms of reference for an international expert to assist in the detailed operational design of the council. In February 2002, the consultant completed a report on the establishment, structure, and functions of a National Council on Family Planning. The recommendations of the report were adopted and the council was elevated to a Higher Council for Population and Development. After the evacuation and the ministerial change, this activity, functioning substantially on its own, was eliminated from the JPAP scope of work in favor of other activities.

² A condition that causes mild or severe anemia from reduced hemoglobin and fewer red blood cells than normal.

MOSD WOMEN'S UNIT

At the request of Her Excellency Dr. Rowaida Ma'aitah, JPAP provided technical assistance in the form of a local consultant to develop a women's unit at the Ministry of Social Development to address gender issues among the poor. The consultant defined the organization and functions of the unit and produced a work plan for the unit's activities. JPAP helped to identify a director for the unit, who was placed in June 2003. The limited success of the unit highlighted one of the setbacks of the JPAP program—the high turnover of Ministers, each with a set of issues to pursue. In addition, the development of the unit highlights the importance of organizational jurisdiction—originally the women's unit was placed within the Minister's office, but after it was moved to a different section in the Ministry, it was difficult for the unit to attract attention and resources for its activities.

WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

The first forum on Women in the Workforce in Jordan was conducted in August 2002. This forum tackled the condition of women in the Jordanian labor force and set forth recommendations for the future.

Cross-cutting Tasks

JPAP was instrumental in creating the first Autism Center in Jordan. During the first study tour, the group visited a school facility in Virginia and developed a concept paper, which was submitted to USAID and the Minister of Social Development. The mother of an autistic child used the paper to garner support and funding to start the center, the first of its kind in Jordan, with technical assistance provided by a Christian school for teacher training. The school opened in June 2004, under the patronage of the Prime Minister.

Staff Training

An important component of JPAP was the level of training it provided to the local staff for professional development. Such training included the professional development aspect of the U.S. Study Tour, internal workshops, and local seminars, in addition to the major international training events listed below.

Staff	Training	Place	From	To
Ruba Atallah	International Conference on Territorial Development	Paris, France	January 27, 2002	February 1, 2002
Lamia Saket	International Conference on Territorial Development	Paris, France	January 27, 2002	February 1, 2002
Lamia Saket	Workshop on Contract Compliance and Performance Monitoring for Public-Private Projects - IP3	Washington D.C.- USA	October 14, 2002	October 25, 2002
Salma Jaouni	Leaders in Development: Managing Political and Economic reform.	Harvard University - USA	June 5, 2003	June 29, 2003
Perit Hakuz	Strategic Direction for E-Government	Harvard University Web-based training	April 2, 2003	Sept 19, 2003

Recommendations for Follow-on

As the National Strategy developed, it became evident that support for implementation of Strategy recommendations was essential. A scope of work was developed for a second task order to immediately proceed with implementation.

The follow-on activity was to support and assist H.E. the Minister of Social Development in strategic policy development and implementation of the National Strategy for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, based on recommendations adopted from *Poverty Alleviation for a Stronger Jordan: Comprehensive National Strategy* including the following:

- Oversee and monitor the reform of the NAF as derived from the comprehensive management and functional evaluation and those recommended by H.E. the Minister of Social Development.
- Provide technical assistance to implement a replacement of the present Recurrent Cash Assistance program with the Family Income Supplement program.
- Continue to support the design, construction, and implementation of a unified database to centralize all data on poverty and family assistance provided in Jordan.
- Provide limited short-term technical assistance if the Government of Jordan requests the Ministry of Social Development to design and set up a governmental body to oversee family planning in Jordan.
- Provide limited, targeted, short-term technical assistance to the Ministry of Labor to support initiatives complementing the National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation.
- Manage implementation of a small grants fund.

Appendix A. National Strategy Achievements

Table A1.
Achievements of Jordan's National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation, May 2004³

Objective	Achievement
P O V E R T Y M A P P I N G	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop GIS poverty maps at governorate level • Produce reports indicating basic needs • Measure poverty at individual level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps using 1997 HEIS data completed at governorate level • Sample size for 2002-2003 HEIS doubled from 6,000 to 13,000 households • Waiting for data from 2002-2003 HEIS survey to establish poverty line
N A F S T R A T E G Y	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernize structure, procedures, delivery mechanisms • Replace Recurrent Cash Assistance (RCA) program with Family Income Supplement (FIS) • Target FIS beneficiaries for work training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRD and Quality Assurance programs developed • FIS program rules adopted • 66,451 families served (192,085 individuals) • New eligibility criteria developed based on poverty status (to be ratified) • Benefits threshold raised • 392 FIS recipients benefited from university loans • Names of FIS beneficiaries provided to MOL for work opportunities • 233 FIS clients on VTC programs; 9000 FIS clients trained by VTCs

³ Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the UNDP, *Jordan Human Development Report, 2004*.

Objective	Achievement
G O V E R N A N C E A N D C O - O R D I N A T I O N	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure active participation of stakeholders in implementing recommendations of the JPAS • Mechanisms for strategy's efficiency and sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 member National Steering Committee (Secretary General level) meeting regularly to identify poverty alleviation projects and facilitate implementation • Focal points from each Ministry meeting regularly to help operationalize the strategy
N A T I O N A L A S S I S T A N C E D A T A B A S E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop unified database • Standardize application format for national number • Develop internal database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Database engine selected; hardware purchased; tender for database underway • 300 NAF staff being trained in IT skills • Data entry system for national information field questionnaire with DOS
M I C R O F I N A N C E	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new methods for implementing best practices • Establish advisory center for best practices • Establish database of borrowers, unified financial accounting system • Strengthen role of community revolving credit schemes • Identify who is doing what at the community level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMIR uses unified standard reporting system, database for borrowers underway • Underway at AMIR through national database for borrowers using GIS (see also achievements under EPP)
V I L L A G E C L U S T E R P R O G R A M	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage NGOs to work with communities • Initiate housing projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of housing for the poor completed • Housing project at Dayr-Alla 80 percent completed; MOSD housing project initiated
J O B F A C I L I T A T I O N / P U B L I C - P R I V A T E P A R T N E R S H I P S	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine wages (minimum and low wages) • Involve private business leaders in job creation and poverty alleviation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2003 minimum wage raised from JD80 (\$113) to JD85 (\$120) • 770 women from NAF beneficiary households employed in private industries through the National Employment Program • National Employment Center being established at MOL

Objective	Achievement
H E A L T H S T R A T E G Y	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop aggressive, combined approach to minimize population growth • Expand healthy villages • Train local community health and social workers • Develop comprehensive health insurance that includes all the poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowering women in reproductive health–12,600 women reached by end of 2002 • Midwives trained on RH/FP services; enforcing prenatal examination • National Population Commission elevated to Higher Council for Population • Original 30 villages completed (but no expansion) • 44 workers trained in 4 programs for vocational health (MOH) • PHCI trained 2000 workers; 100 centers upgraded • Children under 6 fully covered in joint scheme MOH and NAF
E D U C A T I O N	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair infrastructure • Provide uniforms to students, student loans, etc. • Expand school lunch program • Mobilize adult literacy • Assess market needs and introduce new vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies to prepare tenders initiated • 8,500 school bags distributed through zakat and NGOs for 2003 school years • 400 university loans were extended to students • Meals provided by MOE program ending July 2003; 25,000 in 215 schools • Meals to KG students in poor rural areas by MOE with MOPIC, MOSD, and UNICEF • 350 adult literacy centers now open--an increase of 32 over 2002 • Vocational training of new entrants to labor force: 3 months training – attitudinal change towards work and discipline in work ethics; 204 graduates (19 women)
P U B L I C A W A R E N E S S	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct national poverty conference • Establish NGO network through NCFA • Public relations presentation • Technology links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National conference to launch strategy, May 2001 • Planning for national conference on poverty and unemployment • JPAP website links to poverty-related sites (national and international)

Appendix B. Public Awareness Tools

Reports and Publications

- Assessment and Recommendations for Reducing Poverty in Jordan, June 2001 (Richard Adams)
- Family Planning and Reproductive Health (report and presentation), Dr. Bushra Jabre
- Implementation of the Jordan Poverty Alleviation Strategy (JPAS): Current Challenges
- Overview of the National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation for a Stronger Jordan: Initiatives and Achievements
- Report on the Study Tour and Recommendations
- Review of the Jordan National Aid Fund, August 2001 (Juani Diaz)
- *Poverty Alleviation for a Stronger Jordan*
- *Poverty Measurements in Jordan*

Multimedia

WEB SITE

www.jpap.jo

CD-ROMS

- Jordan Poverty Alleviation Project, Flash presentation
- National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation

POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

- Accomplishments of MOSD for Presentation to His Majesty King Abdullah (February 2002)
- RFP for outsourcing NAF management, presentation to group of Cabinet Ministers (February 2002)
- National Council on Family Affairs (January 2002)
- National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation (January 2002 - English and Arabic)